

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-16 (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A server for use in an automated meter reading system, the automated meter reading system having a plurality of utility meters for measuring and recording metered data, a plurality of nodes, each node communicating with a number of designated meters to read the meter data, a plurality of gateways, each gateway communicating with a number of the nodes to receive the meter data, and a data network interfaced to communicate with the plurality of gateways,

~~wherein~~ the server is being interfaced with the data network to receive the meter data read from the gateways,

~~wherein~~ the server ~~stores~~ storing first electronic data representative of meter assignments to at least one node and second electronic data electronically keyed to said first electronic data and representative of node assignments to at least one gateway, ~~and~~

~~wherein~~ the server ~~groups~~ grouping together a plurality of nodes to define groups of noninterfering nodes based at least in part on the node assignments and ~~groups~~ grouping together a plurality of gateways to define sets of noninterfering gateways, and

the server broadcasting a request for meter data sequentially to each group of non-interfering nodes.

18. (Previously Presented). The server of claim 17, wherein said server stores information related to the topology of gateways, nodes, meters, and their respective interconnections and/or interfaces in a topology database.

19. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 18, wherein said topology database is initially populated generated based on a geographic location of every meter, node, and gateway in the system.

20. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 18, wherein cells are defined, each of said cells defining a plurality of meters that each communicate with a particular node.

21. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 20, wherein said ~~host~~ server determines which nodes communicate with which gateways in accordance with said cells.

22. (Currently Amended) The server of claim 17, wherein said noninterfering ~~meters,~~ nodes and gateways are defined in ~~said~~ a topology database by like identifiers, and wherein said ~~host~~ server addresses noninterfering ones of said ~~meters,~~ nodes and gateways by sending a command containing said like identifiers.